REMARKS

STATUS IF THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1-33 are pending.

Claims 14-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as allegedly being directed to non-statutory subject matter.

Claims 1-33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Hashimoto Hirobumi, Japanese Publication No. 2000-306026, hereinafter referred to as "Hirobumi."

In accordance with the foregoing, the claims are amended, and, thus, the pending claims remain for reconsideration, which is respectfully requested.

No new matter has been added.

The Examiner's rejections are traversed.

35 U.S.C. § 101 REJECTION:

Claims 14-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as allegedly being directed to non-statutory subject matter.

The examiner states that the limitation of the claim raises a question as to whether or not "the limitation actually claims the program." The examiner also states that the claim "would have established a statuary category of the invention" if the program were "stored on an appropriate medium" and would perform the function when the program is "read and executed by the computer/processor." In accordance with the foregoing, claims 14-22 are amended taking into consideration the Examiner's comments. Withdrawal of the claim rejection is respectfully requested.

35 U.S.C. § 102(b) REJECTION:

Hirobumi allegedly anticipates independent claims 1, 5, 11, 12, 14, 18, 24 and 28.

Amended claim 1, recites, in part, "<u>confirming if an authority to give said first user permission to read said specific data is granted to said second user by</u> comparing the received first digital signature with a second digital signature." Support for the claim amendment, for example, is on page 2, lines 9-11 of the application Specification. Thus, there is no new matter in the amended claim.

As the examiner stated in the 35 U.S.C. § 102 rejection, Hirobumi discusses "the hash values," "the signature," and "an access control parameter." However, Hirobumi fails to disclose,

either expressly or inherently, "confirming if an authority to give said first user permission to read said specific data is granted to said second user by comparing the received first digital signature with a second digital signature."

Hirobumi discusses, in the Abstract, "**an access control parameter for controlling the read and update** input items on the document and records in a job database **is separated to a server parameter and a user definition parameter** (1101). **The hash values of the respective parameters** are found, enciphered signatures are added (1103), and the template is transmitted..." The "hash values" and the "signature" in Hirobumi are utilized to confirm "falsification of the parameter." As described in the abstract of Hirobumi, "the read and update of input items on the document and records" is not controlled by using the "hash values" or the "signature," but by using "an access control parameter." The "access control parameter" in Hirobumi may correspond to the conventional "access control table," which is described in page 7, lines 6-16 of the specification as conventional art.

In contrast, claim 1 recites in part, "confirming if **an authority to give said first user permission to read said specific data** is granted to said second user by comparing the received first **digital signature with a second digital signature**," in other words, "an authority to give said first user permission to read said specific data" is confirmed by using the "digital signature" in the claimed embodiment. The claimed embodiment using "hash values" of, for example, dependent claim 2, or the "digital signatures" of, for example, independent claim 1, as access control information, has the benefit of enabling the access control more flexible than the conventional art using "access control table" does.

As discussed above, Hirobumi fails to disclose, either expressly or inherently, that the "first digital signature...[and] second digital signature" are used to confirm if "an authority to give said first user permission to read said specific data." Moreover, there is no motivation in Hirobumi to use the "digital signature" as claimed, since Hirobumi discloses "an access control parameter" to control "the read and update of input items on the document and records."

Therefore, the Applicants respectfully submit claim 1 is not anticipated by, or obvious from, Hirobumi.

Claim 2 recites, in part, "which represents that an authority to read said specific data is granted to said first user." Support for the claim amendment, for example, is on page 4, lines 25-28 of the application Specification. Thus, there is no new matter in the amended claim

Dependent claim 2 recites patentably distinguishing features of its own or is at least patentably distinguishing due to its dependence from one of the independent claims.

Specifically, as described above, Hirobumi fails to disclose, either expressly or inherently, that the "hash data" is used to represent "an <u>authority to read said specific data is granted to said</u> first user." Moreover, there is no motivation in Hirobumi to use the "hash values" as claimed.

Claim 3, recites, in part, "<u>confirming if an authority to give said first user permission to read said specific data is granted to said second user by</u> comparing the generated second hash data with hash data." Support for the claim amendment, for example, is based on page 2, line 30 - page 3, line 1 of the specification. Thus, there is no new matter in the amended claim.

Dependent claim 3 recites patentably distinguishing features of its own or is at least patentably distinguishing due to its dependence from one of the independent claims.

Specifically, as mentioned above, Hirobumi fails to disclose, either expressly or inherently, "confirming if an authority to give said first user permission to read said specific data is granted to said second user <u>by comparing the generated second hash data with hash data</u>." Moreover, there is no motivation in Hirobumi to use the "hash values" as claimed.

Claim 4 recites, in part, "<u>which represents that an authority to read said specific data is granted to said first user</u>." Support for the claim amendment, for example, is based on page 4, lines 25-28 of the specification. Thus, there is no new matter in the amended claim.

Dependent claim 4 recites patentably distinguishing features of its own or is at least patentably distinguishing due to its dependence from one of the independent claims.

Specifically, as described above, Hirobumi fails to disclose, either expressly or inherently, that the "hash data" is used to represent "<u>an authority to read said specific data is granted to said first user</u>." Moreover, there is no motivation in Hirobumi to use the "hash values" as claimed.

Claim 5 recites, in part, "<u>confirming if an authority to give said first user permission to read said specific data is granted to said second user by</u> comparing the received first digital signature with a second digital signature… carrying out a setting to ~~grant~~ allow said user ~~an authority~~ to update said specific data" Support for the claim amendment, for example, is based on page 3, lines 11-15 of the specification. The phrases " carrying out a setting to ~~grant~~ allow said user ~~an authority~~ to update said specific data " are supported, for example, on page 16, lines 22-29 of the specification. Thus, there is no new matter in the amended claim.

Specifically, as mentioned above, Hirobumi fails to disclose, either expressly or inherently, "confirming if an authority to update said specific data is granted to said user <u>by</u>

comparing the received first digital signature with a second digital signature." Moreover, there is no motivation in Hirobumi to use the "digital signatures" as claimed. To conclude, the claimed embodiment is not anticipated by or obvious from Hirobumi.

Claim 6 recites, in part, "confirming if an authority to read said specific data is granted to said user by comparing said first hash data with second hash data ... carrying out a setting to ~~grant~~ allow said user ~~an authority~~ to read said specific data" Support for the claim amendment, for example, is based on page 3, lines 25-28 of the specification. The phrases "carrying out a setting to ~~grant~~ allow said user ~~an authority~~ to read said specific data" are supported, for example, on page 18, lines 8-11 of the specification. Thus, there is no new matter in the amended claim.

Dependent claim 6 recites patentably distinguishing features of its own or is at least patentably distinguishing due to its dependence one of the independent claims.

Specifically, as mentioned above, Hirobumi fails to disclose, either expressly or inherently, "confirming if an authority to read said specific data is granted to said user by comparing said first hash data with second hash data." Moreover, there is no motivation in Hirobumi to use the "hash values" as claimed.

Dependent claims 7 –10 recite patentably distinguishing features of their own or are at least patentably distinguishing due to their dependence one of the independent claims.

For example, although Hirobumi discloses receiving a signature from a user, Hirobumi fails to disclose, either expressly or inherently, "**registering** said updated specific data, said third hash data, and said third **digital signature into said data storage unit**" as recited in claim 8. Since Hirobumi never discloses or suggests using the signature, as access control information as claimed, there is no motivation in Hirobumi to "register" a digital signature received from a user.

Claim 11, recites, in part, "wherein the registered hash and the registered digital signature is used to confirm if an authority to access said specific data is grand to an access requestor." Support for the claim amendment, for example, is based on page 7, lines 4-16 of the specification. Thus, there is no new matter in the amended claim.

As discussed above, Hirobumi fails to disclose, either expressly or inherently, registering the digital signature received from a user, and there is no motivation in Hirobumi to register a digital signature received from the user. Moreover, it is not described or suggested in Hirobumi that the "digital signature" and the "hash values" are used to confirm "if an authority to access

said specific data is granted to an access requestor," and there is no motivation in Hirobumi to use the "digital signature" and the "hash values" as claimed.

Therefore, the Applicants respectfully submit the claim 11 is not anticipated by or obvious from Hirobumi.

Claim 12 recites, in part, "said digital signature as <u>data representing permission to update said specific</u> data." Support for the claim amendment, for example, is based on page 4, lines 21-22 in the specification. Thus, the amended claim does not include any new matter.

Hirobumi fails to disclose, either expressly or inherently, that the "digital signature" represents "<u>permission to update said specific data</u>," and there is no motivation in, Hirobumi to use the "digital signature" as claimed.

Therefore, the Applicants respectfully submit the claim 11 is not anticipated by or obvious from Hirobumi.

Claim 13 recites, in part, "<u>which represents that an authority to read said specific data is granted to said user</u>." Support for the claim amendment, for example, is based on page 4, line 30 - page 5, line 1 in the specification. Thus, the amended claim does not include any new matter.

Dependent claim 13 recites patentably distinguishing features of its own or is at least patentably distinguishing due to its dependence one of the independent claims.

Specifically, Hirobumi fails to disclose, either expressly or inherently, that the "hash values" represents that "<u>an authority to read said specific data is granted said user</u>," and there is no motivation in Hirobumi to use the "hash values" as claimed.

Independent claims 14 and 18 recite similar features as independent claims 1 and 5, respectively and patentably distinguish over the cited prior art for the similar reasons. Claims 14 and 18 recite, in part, " A computer<u>-readable medium storing a</u> program..." Support for the claim amendment, for example, is based on page 5, lines 2-9 in the specification. Thus, the amended claims do not include any new matter.

Dependent claims 15-17 and 19-23 recite patentably distinguishing features of their own for the similar reasons as claims 2-4 and 6-10, respectively, or are at least patentably distinguishing due to their dependence one of the independent claims.

Claims 24-33 recites similar features as claims 1-10 and patently distinguish over the cited prior art for similar reasons.

<u>CONCLUSION</u>

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.
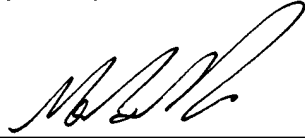
Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

STAAS & HALSEY LLP

Date: ___December 6, 2006___   By: _____

Mehdi Sheikerz
Registration No. 41,307

1201 New York Avenue, NW, 7th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005
Telephone: (202) 434-1500
Facsimile: (202) 434-1501